



"The Song of Angels," He Qi.

Sunday, December 25, 2022

Christmas Day

Welcome to worship with the First Baptist Church of Christ.

Whatever road has brought you here and wherever you should go once we depart, know that you are welcome in this space fully and completely, and that the image of God we all bear together this hour is more complete because you are here as a part of it.

Things to Know

Masks are now optional on the church campus. We understand there are those within the congregation who will need or want to continue to wear masks, and we will continue to keep masks around the church for those who may want to use them.

Restrooms can be found through the double doors on the side near the elevator, one flight of stairs up or one flight down.

Participate in the service as much or as little as you like. Stand when others stand, or remain seated. Sing when others sing, or enjoy the way this old sanctuary fills with sound. Invitations to stand as you are able are marked with an asterisk (*). Invitations to respond in word or song are noted in bold.

For Those With Children

Thank you for bringing a child to worship! Take a deep breath and know they are welcome here. Parents with infants are more than welcome to remain in the sanctuary, or ushers can direct you down the back stairs to a comfortable room with sound from the sanctuary so all can still hear the service. A nursery is provided for children younger than 3. Preschoolers (age 3-Kindergarten) are invited to leave after “Let the Children Come” for our W.O.W. (Working on Worship) experience.

For Those with Special Needs

Thank you for joining us for worship! We love our historic buildings, but know they can be a challenge for those with mobility needs. Know that we are committed to doing all we can to make this space welcoming to everyone. Reserved seating for those in wheel chairs and those sitting with them is found near the elevator, and is marked with signs on the walls and on the back of the pews. Please don't hesitate to ask an usher for assistance. If you have special hearing needs, please ask one of the ushers to bring you a hearing assistance device from the sound booth in the back, or feel free to go back there and get one. An accessible restroom is located up one floor across from the office. If you, or someone with you, requires special assistance for any reason, please find a minister or an usher.

THE OFFERING OF PRAISE

The Sounding of the Hour

Anne Armstrong

Marianne Kell, acolyte

The Prelude

"On This Day, Earth Shall Ring"

Phil Lehenbauer

Anne Armstrong, organ

The Call to Worship

Scott Dickison

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises.

Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre, with the lyre and the sound of melody.

With trumpets and the sound of the horn make a joyful noise before the King, the Lord.

Let the sea roar, and all that fills it; the world and those who live in it.

Let the floods clap their hands; let the hills sing together for joy
at the presence of the Lord, for God is coming to judge the earth.

The Lord will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity.

Psalm 98:4-9

*The Hymn of Praise 102

Joy to the World

ANTIOCH

Joy to the world! the Lord is come; let earth receive her King:

Let every heart prepare Him room,

And heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing,

And heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the earth! the Savior reigns; let men their songs employ;

While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains

Repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,

Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrow grow, nor thorns infest the ground;

He comes to make His blessings flow

Far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found,

Far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove

The glories of His righteousness,

And wonders of His love, and wonders of His love,

And wonders, wonders of His love.

*The Invocation

Kelsey Stillwell

*The Gloria Patri 705

GLORIA PATRI

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be.
World without end. Amen, amen.**

The Welcome

Scott Dickison

“Let the Children Come”

Rebecca Pursiful

Children in 3K-K are invited to W.O.W., a preschool worship experience! We will meet with the W.O.W. Shepherds at the end of “Let the Children Come.” Pick up your children there after worship. The W.O.W. leader this week is Rebecca Pursiful and the shepherd this week is Audrey Dickison.

THE OFFERING OF GIFTS

*The Hymn of Offertory 104

Once in Royal David's City

IRBY

**Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby in a manger for His bed.
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little Child.**

**He came down to earth from heaven who is God and Lord of all,
And His shelter was a stable, and His cradle was a stall.
With the poor and meek and lowly
Lived on earth our Savior holy.**

**For He is our childhood's pattern; day by day on earth He grew;
He was tempted, scorned, rejected, tears and smiles like us He knew.
Thus He feels for all our sadness,
And He shares in all our gladness.**

**Not in that poor lowly stable, with the oxen standing by,
We shall see Him, but in heaven set at God's right hand on high;
When like stars His children crowned,
Robed in white shall gather round.**

*The Offertory Prayer

Eric Spears
Deacon of the Week

The Offertory

“Good Christian Men Rejoice”

arr. Richard A. Nichols

Dannie Smith, horn

*The Offertory Response 131

In the Bleak Midwinter

CRANHAM

(stanza 4)

**What can I give Him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
If I were a wise man, I would do my part;
Yet what I can I give Him: give Him my heart.**

Christina Rossetti

THE OFFERING OF THE WORD

The First Lesson

Isaiah 9:2-7

Scott Nash

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

For the Word of God in Holy Scripture,

Thanks be to God.

The Pastoral Prayer and Lord's Prayer

Kelsey Stillwell

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever and ever, Amen.

The Anthem

"Away in a Manger"

CRADLE SONG

Emily, Marianne, and Eleanor Kell

Vicki and Dannie Smith

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

For the Good News of God,

Thanks be to God.

The Sermon

“Holding a Baby”

Scott Dickison

THE OFFERING OF COMMITMENT

*The Hymn of
Commitment 138

How Far Is It to Bethlehem

STOWEY

**How far is it to Bethlehem, not very far?
Shall we find the stable room lit by a star?
Can we see the little child, is He within?
If we lift the wooden latch, may we go in?
May we stroke the creatures there, oxen or sheep?
May we peek like them and see Jesus asleep?
If we touch His tiny hand, will He awake?
Will He know we've come so far just for His sake?**

**O what can I give to Him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I'd bring a lamb;
If I were a wise man I'd do my part;
Yet what can I give to Him? Give Him my heart.**

*The Benediction

Scott Dickison

*The Congregational Response

“Alleluia”

traditional chant

Postlude

“Postlude on GLORIA”
Anne Armstrong, organ

Jason Payne



OUR LIFE TOGETHER

Sunday, December 25

11:00 am

Worship

Monday, December 26

Office Closed

Tuesday, December 27

Office Closed

Wednesday, December 28

No Wednesday night activities

Sunday, January 1

11:00 am

Worship

Monday, January 2

Office Closed

Deacon of the Week

December 22

Eric Spears

December 29

Linda and Andrew Manis

Birthdays

December 27

Shirley Myers

December 28

Barry Johns

December 29

David Davis

Greta O'Dell

Scott Walker

December 30

Beau Roberts

The Record Speaks

Date:	11/30/22
Budget:	\$601,815
Receipts: (Offering):	\$590,000
Receipts: (Endowment):	\$59,180
Expenses:	\$611,230
Missions:	\$34,542
Year to Date:	(\$20,700)

Condolences

We grieve with the family of **David McMahan** on his death on December 11.

Wednesday Night Supper

There will be no Wednesday night meal or activities on January 4.

Office Closed

The church office will be closed on December 26 and 27 and January 2.

Holiday Sunday School Schedule

There will be no children's or youth Sunday school classes on January 1st.

Book Club

January 22, 6:00 pm

116 Waterford Place

We will discuss *SAVING US: A Climate Scientist's Case for Hope and Healing in a Divided World* by Katharine Hayhoe. This is a multilayered look at science, faith, and human psychology, from an icon in her field. According to The New York Times-United Nations Champion of the Earth, climate scientist, and evangelical Christian Katharine Hayhoe changes the debate on how we can save our future in this nationally bestselling "optimistic view on why collective action is still possible-and how it can be realized".

End of the Year Gifts

All end of the year gifts must be postmarked or received at the church by Saturday, December 31, in order to be counted toward this year. The church office will be closed on Dec. 26 and 27, and Jan 2. Otherwise, we will keep our normal office hours of 8:30 am-1:30pm, Monday to Thursday.

If you bring gifts after hours, you may deposit them in the mail slot on the double doors under the awning that lead into the fellowship hall on High Place, just to the left of the main entrance to the sanctuary.

If you give online, please note that gifts must be posted by Dec 31, which may be a few days after you press send—so don't delay!

Thank you for your generosity that has put us in a position to end the year on a high note!

NOTES AND DOODLES



NOW. HERE. THIS.

Often, on Christmas,
I listen to a chant
Float from a colored window
Softly sibilant.

Often, on Christmas,
I wait until a glow
From a colored pane of glass
Slides across the snow.

Yet though I hear songs,
And listen from without,
I never quite know what
Christmas is about.

I never quite know—
Till, singing on my breast
And warm as a colored light,
Your head is at rest.

“On Christmas,” by Marion Strobel, 1924

We must be careful with the Nativity scene.

If we fix the camera's lens of our mind's
eye too closely on the mother and child we
risk missing all that scripture tells us was
happening around it. There is a way it can
become too pristine, too saccharine sweet,
too small.

So one way to guard against this is to pan
out and see the wider image—the empire
lurking in the shadows, the evil king
threatened by a baby, migrant workers the
first to know what is happening, foreigners
having more of a clue to the movement of
the Spirit than those of us on the inside.

All of this is important and opens this
familiar story up for us in new ways.

And yet another way, a way Marion
Strobel chooses in the poem above, is to
focus our gaze on this mother and her baby
even tighter. To consider the miracle of any
and all birth. The cosmos that exists in the
space between cheek and breast. The shalom
of a baby and mother at rest. The shalom of
any and all rest.

My prayer for you today and in this short,
twelve-day season to come, is that these
moments will find you. That you will be
reminded in ways as ordinary as they are
surprising of what Christmas is about. God
with us, familiar and new. New and familiar.
And in all that lies between.

Merry Christmas,

SHD

Signs of the Season

The paraments on the pulpit and communion table and the minister's stoles are visual reminders of the current season of the church year. The season of Christmas lasts for twelve days between Christmas Day and Epiphany. The color white symbolizes purity and hope.



511 High Place Macon, GA 31201 • office: (478) 742-6485 • fax: (478) 742-2112
• www.fbcxmacon.org • Wifi: fbcx-Guest Password is: welcome511

Staff and Leadership

Anne Armstrong
ORGANIST

Kirstine Buchanan
JOHNSON MUSIC
FELLOW

David Cooke
CHAIR OF CHURCH
COUNCIL

Rev. Scott Dickison
PASTOR

Harriet Eason
CHAIR OF DEACONS

Allie Ford
MINISTRY INTERN

Tierra Johnson
CUSTODIAN

Bradley Lott
FACILITIES MANAGER

Connie Pursiful
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Rebecca Pursiful
MINISTRY INTERN

Dr. Stanley L. Roberts
MINISTER OF MUSIC

Eric Spears
VICE CHAIR OF
DEACONS

Rev. Kelsey Stillwell
ASSOCIATE PASTOR FOR
YOUTH AND MISSIONS